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RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ JUN 1078  
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA PRIORITY 2630  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 000498

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/06/2018  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [EFIN](#) [EC](#)  
SUBJECT: FM TELLS CODEL DODD THAT ECUADOR WANTS PEACE,  
TRADE; DENIES ANY TIES TO FARC

Classified By: Ambassador Linda Jewell for reasons 1.4 (b & d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: Senator Christopher Dodd and Representative Xavier Becerra visited Ecuador May 30-31 and met with four senior cabinet ministers. Foreign Minister Maria Isabel Salvador described in detail Ecuador's discontent with Colombia's violation of its border on March 1, but stressed that Ecuador wants peace. She condemned violence propagated by the FARC, and denied any governmental ties to the group. The ministers also told the U.S. delegation that Ecuador wants trade, and is eager to develop a long-term bilateral dialogue on trade, development and social issues. End summary.

12. (SBU) CODEL Dodd held a meeting with senior ministers of the GOE on May 30. Participants included: Senator Christopher Dodd, Representative Xavier Becerra, Ambassador Jewell, and Deputy Chief of Mission Jefferson Brown; Minister of Foreign Affairs Maria Isabel Salvador, Coordinating Minister for Internal and External Security Government and Policy Gustavo Larrea Cabrera, Minister of Government and Policy Fernando Bustamante, Minister of Policy Ricardo Patino Aroca, Vice Foreign Minister Jose Valencia, Under Secretary for Bilateral Relations Diego Stacey, and the Foreign Minister's Chief of Staff Andres Teran.

Ecuador in an "Era of Change"  
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13. (C) Foreign Minister Salvador and Minister Larrea began the meeting by saying that Ecuador is in the process of great change. The government enjoys wide popular support, and the Constituent Assembly is writing a new constitution. Larrea noted GOE achievements since coming to office, including increased access to school and medicines, and said that the GOE had generally restored credibility in the central government. He continued to say that Ecuador is unique in the Andean region, never having known internal armed conflict, or agrarian revolt, as in Colombia or Peru; he also noted that the country is democratic, peaceful, and that a majority of people are property owners. He then said that the Constituent Assembly is mindful of the need to develop a sovereign economy, referring to the instability Ecuador experienced in a 1999 currency crisis.

14. (C) Larrea added that the government exercises zero tolerance for drug cultivation, is not tied in any way to narco-traffickers or their violent influence, and that the GOE are leaders in Latin America in drug seizures. He stressed that this is a long-standing policy of "state" for successive governments of Ecuador, to which the Correa

administration is vigorously committed. Still, he said, Ecuador lives with the effects of the Colombian conflict. He commented that Colombia does not protect its southern border, and that as a result, Ecuador has to cope with the largest refugee population in Latin America because of the displaced persons. That is a commitment they will honor, as a matter of international law and humanitarian duty, but it is difficult. He said the GOE fully respects Colombia's sovereign prerogative to address their internal conflict as they see best, but will not tolerate having that conflict spill over across their own border either in the form of irregular armed groups or the Colombian military. To that end, the GOE has stationed 10,000 troops (25% of its army) on the border. At the same time, the GOE is comm